

I – Expressive Arts Based

Protocol 1 – Group Drum Circle

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This program utilizes group drumming to reduce loneliness, social isolation and passivity. Music is a natural, non-threatening group experience and that active participation in group music promotes group experiences and a sense of belonging.

Staff Requirements: One CTRS per 4 clients

Entrance Criteria: Clients with demonstrated symptoms of social isolation and withdrawal. For client in all stages of cognitive impairments.

Exit Criteria: Clients who demonstrate sensitivity to loud sounds and react negatively to high sound levels as evidenced by increased agitation. Clients who indicate a desire to discontinue.

Group Size: 1 to 8 clients

Duration: 30 minutes. One or more times per week.

Safety Considerations

Environmental Risks: Structure the environment for safety: have firm chairs with straight backs, ensure that all equipment is placed out of the way of clients to avoid potential tripping and falling.

Client Risks: Rotate instruments used by group members to prevent muscle fatigue and problems with over-usage of isolated muscle groups. Make necessary adjustments to hearing aids for clients to ensure that they remain comfortable throughout the program. Avoid overexertion for those clients with COPD and cardiac insufficiencies.

Facility & Equipment Required

Facility: Room with chairs.

Equipment: Various types of drums and mallets. See methods.

Methods

1. Greet each client by making eye contact, shaking his/her hand, and assisting him/her to a chair (or open space in the circle if the client is using a wheelchair for mobility). The clients should be seated in a circle.
2. Offer each client the choice of a frame drum with Velcro handles (and/or a stand) and a soft tip mallet, a paddle drum and mallet, a shaker, or a tambourine. Drum stands allow clients to play with two mallets, thus increasing body movement, while holding the drum or placing it on the client's lap increases the vibrotactile stimulation. An increase in the vibrotactile stimulation has been proven to increase participation in drumming by participants with severe dementia.
3. Encourage the clients to choose between using their hands to make the rhythm or the mallet. Making the rhythm with the hand rather than the mallet enables clients to more fully "feel"

the rhythm. The use of a mallet may increase participation and accessibility for some clients for the following reasons:

- 1) A mallet is a cognitive enhancer or “cue” to the client.
- 2) “Technique” is not an issue when trying to produce tone or bass sounds.
- 3) A mallet decreases potential for discomfort caused by drumming among clients with degenerative joint disease and/ or joint pain.
4. Welcome each client by playing the rhythm of his or her name and ask him/her to repeat the rhythm back.
5. Move to the center of the group and play the “Heart Beat” rhythm. The facilitator should beat the HeartBeat on a small djun-djun or bass drum.
6. Move around the group encouraging active participation with each client. Movement should be done on a stool with wheels to ensure that the facilitator remains at eye level with clients who are seated.
7. Visual cues are essential. Eye contact, body language, and mirroring should consistently be used to encourage and enable the clients to participate.
8. After the clients have been drumming in a similar rhythm pattern for a period of time, signal the group to stop by calling out “4, 3, 2, 1, Stop” OR playing the rhythm “Shave-and-a-hair-cut - two-bits.”
9. Introduce a familiar song to the group and play the rhythm while singing the song. Whenever possible encourage the clients to choose the songs. When the song is completed call out 4,3,2,1, “Stop” OR play the rhythm “Shave-and-a-hair-cut - two-bits.” Repeat this with 2 or 3 very familiar songs to the group.
10. Begin playing the Heart Beat rhythm again. Encourage each client to play his or her drum by moving around the room. To optimize meaningful interaction between the facilitator and the lower functioning client, the following method is encouraged: the facilitator drums a note or two on a client’s drum and then offers his/her drum to the client to drum on in response. This can be repeated to encourage social interaction and playfulness. After each client has had the opportunity to interact with the facilitator via the drum, call out “4,3,2,1, “Stop” or play the rhythm “Shave-and-a-hair-cut - two-bits.”
11. Clap hands in celebration of the music that has been made.
12. Gather up each drum or rhythm instrument, shake each clients hand, make eye contact, thank each client and validate a meaningful contribution made by the client to the program.

Possible Client Objectives

- Increased sense of group identity as evidenced by actively making music together.
- Increased feelings of belonging as evidenced by sustaining and repeating a steady beat with the group (rhythmic entrainment).
- Increased attention span as evidenced by staying in the group and actively participating in the program for longer than 20 minutes.
- Decreased passive behaviors as evidenced by remaining in group and participating.

